



NEWS RELEASE

Today's Date: Wednesday February 1, 2006 -- 05-005
District: District 2 - Redding
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UPDATE: State Route 299 Scaling Begins on McDonald Bluff Slide

REDDING – The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 2 continues making progress removing loose material from the active slide on State Route (SR) 299, one-half mile west of Burnt Ranch near the Trinity/Humboldt county line.

The area, known as McDonalds Bluff, with a history of previous slide activity, reactivated during the large storm systems that pounded the north state over the New Year's Holiday weekend. For the past month intermittent slide activity and removal efforts have resulted in road closures of 15 minutes to 18 hours.

Crews have currently removed approximately 12,000 – 14,000 cubic yards of material from the slide and anticipate an additional 15,000 or more before they reach stable ground. At project completion, enough rock and debris to cover four-and-a-half football fields three-feet high will have been removed from the slope.

Scaling operations normally performed by crews tying off, repelling down the slope and removing the material with pry bars, were determined to be too dangerous. The rock on this slope is extremely brittle and an enormous amount of loose material could come down at any time.

Engineers from Caltrans and the project contractor, Ron Jurin Construction of Redding evaluated options and determined the safest method with the best control over the amount of material moved would be to use a swing yarder and cable system.

A swing yarder, which resembles a crane, is traditionally used in logging operations on steep terrain. The cable system is anchored to the top of the slope and logs are hoisted uphill and loaded. For this operation, rather than hoisting logs, a pair of large steel grappling hooks connected in tandem or a steel "T" beam with spikes welded on, will be dragged up and down the slope. Loose material will be allowed to fall while crew members remain safely out of the way. With the instability of this slope, this system should bring down more rock in an hour than a standard crew on ropes could knock down in a day.

Motorists can expect delays of 30 minutes or longer over the next two-weeks while crews scale and clear the area of fallen debris.

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Swing Yarder



Grappling Hooks



Cable Scaling



McDonalds Bluff



Loader clearing
slide material



Staging slide material prior
to disposal



For information on road conditions, and chain controls go to <http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist2/> or call 1-800-GAS-ROAD

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NOTE: An electronic version of this news release and high resolution photos are available on the Internet at the following web address: http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist2/news_releases.htm

